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ABSTRACT

In fall 2002 staff of the Los Rios Community College District (LRCCD) Office of Institutional Research collaborated with occupational deans, academic deans, and faculty to develop and administer a survey of former students of Office Administration. The survey was designed to determine how well courses had met the needs of former Office Administration students. Of the 230 surveys sent to former students, 92 were returned, a response rate of 40%. The report provides a list of the course content areas in which respondents thought they had been well prepared for work and areas in which some students believed they had not been well prepared. Similar listings are provided for employment skill areas in which students believed they had been well prepared or, in some cases, not well prepared. Employment and salary information are given for survey respondents, and a demographic profile is provided. A substantial proportion of respondents were currently taking or interested in taking additional classes in the LRCCD. (SLD)

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ED 479 973

A Survey of Former Office Administration Students

Summary Findings of Respondents District-wide

June 2003

Office of Institutional Research
Los Rios Community College District

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A SURVEY OF FORMER OFFICE ADMINISTRATION STUDENTS

Summary Findings of Respondents District-wide

June 2003

During Fall 2002 staff of the Los Rios Community College District Office of Institutional Research collaborated with occupational education and academic area deans and Office Administration faculty to develop and administer a survey of former Office Administration students. The program-specific survey was designed to determine how well courses met the needs of former Office Administration students, both those who earned degrees and certificates, as well as those who did not. A total of 230* surveys were sent out to former students, with a total of 92 returned, for a 40.0% response rate.

Table 1: Office Administration Survey Rate of Return

	Total Surveys Mailed*	Total Surveys Returned	% Returned
ARC	60	21	35.0%
CRC	105	39	37.1%
SCC	65	32	49.2%
TOTAL	230	92	40.0%

* Adjusted for undeliverable mail.

Highlights of the survey results follow. For more information, please refer to the more comprehensive frequency distribution reports.

Who Responded to this Survey?

Fairly equivalent proportions of those who earned degrees and certificates (53.3%) and non-returning students (46.7%) responded to the survey of former Office Administration students. Of the respondents who were degree earners, 63.3% earned certificates, while 26.5% earned AA degrees and 10.2% earned AS degrees. The most frequent award given was for Business-Administrative Assistant followed by awards within the Office Administration programs in Data Entry, General Office and Office Assistant/General Clerk. Those who were awarded multiple awards received them for Business-Administrative Assistant, Data Entry, Office Technology, General Office and Office Assistant/General Clerk. Interestingly, this group of multiple awards in Office Administration made up for more than a third (36.7%) of the students who responded.

Office Administration Course Content Areas Where Former Students Believed They Were Very Prepared

Over half, 53.3%, of respondents believe that their keyboarding courses (including speed and accuracy improvement) prepared them very well for employment. Worth noting are the 33.8% of respondents who had to take a keyboarding test as a condition of their employment. The average keystroke per minute for those respondents who provided this information was 52.8 keystrokes per minute. Other courses, ranging from 51.1% to 36.3% of respondents who believed the course prepared them very well are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Office Administration Course Content Areas Where the Majority of Students Believed They Were Very Prepared

Rank	Office Administration Course Content Areas	% Very Prepared
1.	Keyboarding (including speed and accuracy)	53.3%
2.	Word Processing (formatting letters, e-mail, reports, etc.)	51.1%
3.	Proficiency Using Computer Software (word processing, spreadsheets, etc.)	46.7%
4.	Maintaining Office Files	46.7%
5.	Ten-Key	40.7%
6.	Office Procedures	36.3%

Office Administration Course Content Areas Where Some Students Believed They Were Not Prepared

Overall, students feel adequately or very prepared by their Office Administration courses but there were areas where approximately 10.0% or more of the respondents believed they were not prepared as illustrated in Table 3. More respondents felt they were not prepared for employment by taking courses in "Outlook"; 20.5% of respondents believed they were not prepared.

Table 3: Office Administration Course Content Areas Where Some Students Believed They Were Not Prepared

Rank	Office Administration Course Content Areas	% Not Prepared
1.	Outlook	20.5%
2.	Presentations using PowerPoint	17.8%
3.	Records Management for the Modern Office	13.2%
4.	Internet for the Office Professional	9.9%
5.	Using Office Equipment	9.9%

Employment Skill Areas Where Some Office Administration Students Believed They Were Very Prepared

In each of the employment skill areas over thirty percent of respondents felt they were very prepared as a result of taking our colleges' office administration courses, with 57.6% of respondents indicating they were very prepared by their courses in computer familiarization. The following highlights those areas where over 40.0% of respondents felt they were very prepared as a result of taking our Office Administration courses.

Table 4: Employment Skill Areas Where Some Office Administration Students Believed They Were Very Prepared

Rank	Employment Skill Areas	% Very Prepared
1.	Computer Familiarization	57.6%
2.	Communication Skills (speaking and listening)	48.9%
3.	Working in Team Environments	42.4%
4.	Professionalism in Work Place	41.8%
5.	Writing Skills	41.3%

Employment Skill Areas Where Some Office Administration Students Believed They Were Not Prepared

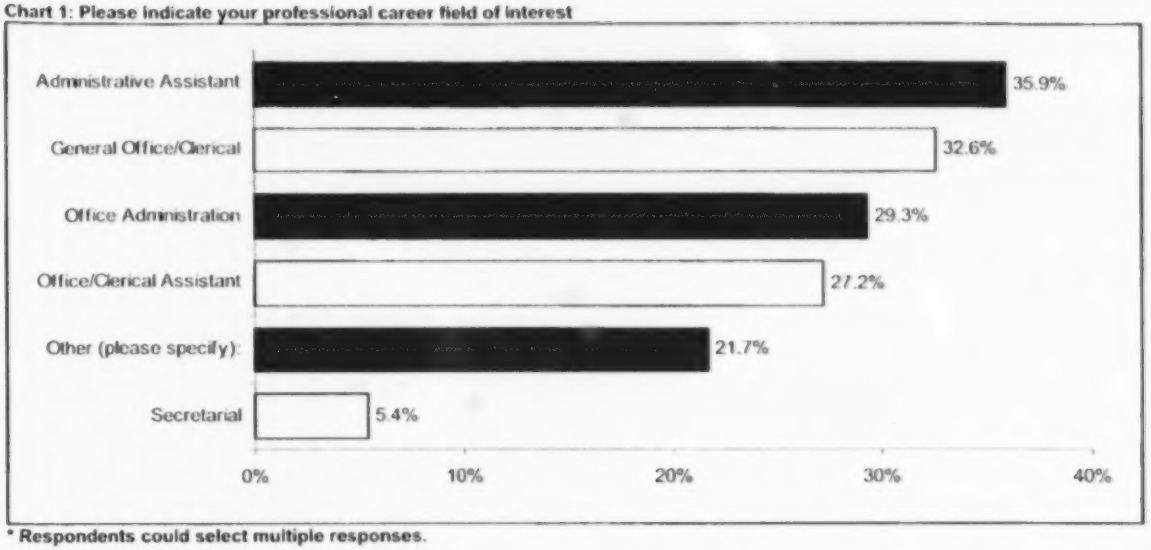
Most respondents felt they were very prepared in various employment skills but there was one area, oral presentation skills, where 9.8% of respondents felt they were not prepared as a result of taking their Office Administration courses.

Employment and Salary Information

Of the former Office Administration students who responded to the survey, 42.5% are currently working in the Office Administration field. Of those who earned a degree or certificate exactly one-half (50.0%) are working in the Office Administration field compared to the 33.3% of non-degree or certificate earners who are. Of those who are currently employed, 35.1% are working in the public sector while 27.3% are working in the private sector. Of additional interest are the 19.5% of respondents who indicated they currently are not employed.

For future Office Administration program planning, it may be helpful to illustrate the professional career fields of interest to the respondents. Chart 1 demonstrates the multiple interests of former Office Administration students within their professional field, with Administrative Assistant, General Office/Clerical, Office Administration and Office/Clerical Assistant being the more dominant fields of interest.

Chart 1: Please indicate your professional career field of interest



*** Respondents could select multiple responses.**

Survey respondents were also asked a series of questions regarding their salary status in the Office Administration field. Unfortunately, less than five percent of respondents chose to provide salary data, hence any analysis is not valid on such a small data set.

Demographic Profile

The demographic profile of the Office Administration population from which the survey sample was drawn and the profile of survey respondents follow.

Table 5: Demographic Profile of Business Sample Population and Survey Respondents by Proportions

	Sample Population	Survey Respondents
Gender		
Female	90.8%	93.5%
Male	9.2%	6.5%
Ethnicity		
African American	7.7%	7.6%
Asian	14.1%	15.2%
Filipino	1.5%	2.2%
Latino	9.5%	6.5%
Native American	0.9%	2.2%
Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.0%
White	63.8%	63.0%
Other and Unknown	2.1%	3.3%
Age		
Under 18 years	0.0%	0.0%
18-20 years	3.1%	1.1%
21-24 years	17.5%	16.3%
25-29 years	21.8%	12.0%
30-39 years	25.5%	22.8%
40 years and over	32.2%	47.8%
By Degree Type		
Degree Earner	53.1%	53.3%
Non-Degree/Certificate Earner	46.9%	46.7%

Survey Highlights

The following are further highlights of the Office Administration survey results:

- While taking their Office Administration courses, 32.6% of respondents felt the Instructional Assistants (IA's) in the classrooms were very helpful, while 23.6% felt they were either extremely helpful or somewhat helpful. While 5.6% of respondents felt the IA's were not very helpful, only 1.1% felt they were not helpful at all.

- A substantial proportion (40.2%) of survey respondents are either currently taking or interested in taking courses at one of our Los Rios colleges while 21.7% of respondents indicated they are either currently taking or interested in taking courses at a 4-year college or university.

- Reflective of an older student population, most likely juggling school, family and careers, a fairly high proportion (32.6%) of respondents indicated they have no interest to further pursue their education at this time.

- Again, indicative of their busy schedules, respondents indicated weekday evenings (27.2%) and weekends (22.8%) were the most convenient times to take classes.

- Of additional interest are the respondents who indicated Distance Education was the most convenient way for them to take classes, specifically web-based courses (20.7%) followed by TV courses (13.0%).

- 47.1% answered, yes, they would be interested in a short (about 9 hours) continuing education course related to Office Administration at our colleges.

- Only 9.9% of respondents indicated they would be interested in participating in an Office Administration program advisory committee, while 35.2% responded they might have an interest and 42.9% are not interested in participating.

This summary report was written by Betty Glyer-Culver, Research Analyst, LRCCD Office of Institutional Research (IR) and is based on research conducted by the "Former Student Follow-up Studies" team: research design, analysis and report writing -- Betty Glyer-Culver, Research Analyst; Web survey and SQL Server support and development -- Minh La, IT Analyst for Institutional Research; coordination of survey mailings -- Chue Lo, Secretary. The *Former Student Follow-up Study Team* gratefully acknowledges input related to survey and report development by IR Director, Judy Beachler, program-specific question development by the occupational education and academic area deans and faculty at the colleges, and the District Office of Workforce and Economic Development, under the direction of Sandy Kirschenmann, for Vocational and Technical Education Act (VTEA) funds which partially supported this project in compliance with funding requirements of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998. Additional copies of this report, as well as the more comprehensive program level reports, can be downloaded from our Web Site at: http://irweb.losrios.edu or by calling 916-568-3131.

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